

Ryan called home weekly, but the thunder of battle sometimes forced him to quickly end those phone calls. As the 2006 Christmas season approached, Ryan was given last-minute leave to spend the holidays at home in Texas with his family and his neighbors in Sabine Pass.

During Christmas, Scottie, Ryan's mother, held her son tightly and told him that she was not going to let him go back to Iraq. Ryan replied, Mr. Speaker, "I've got to go back over there. I've got to make it safe for my wife, my mom, my dad, and all those I love."

Mr. Speaker, amazing people, these Americans who go to war. On January 4, 2007 with nearly a year to go in Iraq, the teenager returned to the battlefront to fight against these insurgents and their terror against the people of Iraq. Ryan was only in Iraq for 5 days when he was shot by a hidden enemy sniper. The wound was fatal.

Last week, 19-year-old U.S. Army Specialist Ryan Berg became the first son of Sabine Pass, Texas, to be killed defending freedom in that land far, far away, of Iraq. For his courage during combat, Ryan was awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

The news of his death at the hands of the anarchists stunned the Berg family and the people of Sabine Pass. Through their tears, Ryan's mother and father, Scottie and Travis; his brother Brad, his sister Marissa, and his new wife, Katie, and countless other relatives and friends have, in their anguish, honored the American warrior.

Ryan's loved ones expressed their pride of his service to America and the bravery their soldier exhibited throughout his career. They also asked for the community to pray not only for Ryan but for those soldiers still amid the dusty trenches fighting for freedom and securing liberty.

Those who knew Ryan, and I have a photograph of him, Mr. Speaker, those who knew him, remember his loyalty to his family and to his friends, but not only as a man who never knew a stranger, but Ryan devoted his life to guarding them from danger, those especially who could not stand up for themselves.

This Nation owes its gratitude, its liberties, its freedom, to people like Specialist Ryan Berg and to brave soldiers who have walked the path of sacrifice for the rest of us.

So God bless Sabine Pass, Texas and God bless the Berg family and God Bless Ryan Berg.

It has been said that when the Rolling Legions went into battle one of their generals once told his men, "How you yet live will echo throughout eternity."

Ryan, your deeds will always speak the example of the spirit of the American soldier.

And that's just the way it is.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of California). Under a pre-

vious order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BRING THE TROOPS HOME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, along with Congresswoman BARBARA LEE and Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, I will be introducing the Bring the Troops Home and Iraqi Sovereignty Restoration Act.

This bill fulfills the voters' November 7 mandate to the Congress. It ends the occupation of Iraq and, at the same time, it strengthens the Iraqi government, and it also meets the needs of our returning troops.

It will, one, bring our troops home; two, it will expedite the training of Iraqi security forces; and three, if invited by the Iraqis, work with the international community to rebuild Iraq's infrastructure, while four, fully funding the commitment we have made to our returning soldiers for full health care benefits, physical and mental.

The situation in Iraq, Mr. Speaker, gets worse every day, and it is clear that we cannot provide security to Iraqis in the middle of a civil war. We need to bring our brave and capable men and women home to safety and to their families, and we need to help the Iraqi people regain their sovereignty.

President Bush does not have a plan to bring our troops home. In fact, if anything, he is escalating this occupation with absolutely no end in sight. Our standing in the region and our standing around the world is at an all time low, and this administration has all but given up on diplomacy.

We can no longer wait for the Commander-in-Chief to come up with a plan. We are in the fourth year of this occupation. We have waited long enough. That is why I will introduce the Bring the Troops Home and Iraqi Sovereignty Restoration Act tomorrow.

Whether my colleagues voted to support the invasion of Iraq or not, they can now unite behind a comprehensive plan, a plan to bring peace and stability to the region.

One of the most important elements of this bill is to live up to the promises made to those who have put their lives on the line for this President's fiasco in Iraq.

Our most solemn obligation is to the men and women who have been placed in harm's way. To fulfill our obligation, we must bring them home to their families, while, at the same time, guaranteeing physical and mental health care for all U.S. veterans of military operations in Iraq and other conflicts around the world. It is the least we can do. It is the least we can

do to show the gratitude of a grateful Nation.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for our troops, stand up for Iraqi sovereignty. Cosponsor the Bring the Troops Home and Iraqi Sovereignty Restoration Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

12-POINT PLAN FOR IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House of Representatives, last week the President of the United States gave a speech to this Nation that he intends to escalate the war against Iraq. Compounding his speech was the point-by-point recitation of his intention to continue to escalate tensions between the United States and the sovereign nation of Iran.

At this moment, when this Congress has honored the memory of Dr. King, it bears reflection as to whether or not we in this Nation have the capacity to begin to pursue a path of nonviolence in our relations with other countries.

Our President is intent on escalating a war against Iraq. He is intent on precipitating a war against Iran. Whatever happened to the science of human relations? Whatever happened to using our head in dealing with people so that war is not an acceptable option, but that peace becomes inevitable because we pursue talking to one another?

If we had taken the case for Iraq to the U.N., we would not have gotten approval for an attack against Iraq. How much better it would have been if this Nation had not decided to attack Iraq, because Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, did not have the intention or capability of attacking the United States, was not trying to get uranium from Niger, did not, in effect, constitute a threat to the United States of America.

And yet, we attacked a nation which did not attack us, at tremendous consequence, the death of over 3,000 American men and women who served this country valiantly, the deaths of over 650,000 innocent Iraqis, according to the Lancet Report, during the conduct of the war; complete annihilation of so much of the cities of Iraq.

What are we doing? What do we stand for as a nation? Does this really represent what America is all about? Or does America have a higher destiny? Is it our destiny to rule the world with our military might? Or is it our destiny to hold up our values of peace and justice, and to live them in our own